

To: the Honorable Judge Ron White
Re: Darrell Ray Belfaire Sanders
Sentencing July 10, 2024

My name is Lonnie Sanders.
I am Darrell Ray's mother.
As such, I have known him
all of his life.

Darrell has struggled and
overcome adversities his
whole life. From the age of
6-9 months, I, his mother,
went to prison. Throughout
this time I was sent photos
of a cheerful, smiling baby.
Upon my return, his father
and I began our family journey.

As my deepest regrets this
included substance abuse and
its ensuing chaos. At 11 years
old, his father put him out
forcing him to live with grandparents.
At 13, his father died unexpectedly
leaving him forever wondering
"did dad ever really love" me.
At 14, Darrell Ray returned home
to a widowed mother and 2 younger
brothers. I was in and out of
addiction. Despite normal teenage
rebellion, Darrell Ray developed a
fierce sense of loyalty toward
his family and those he cared
for. He showed a maturity

beyond his years in the courts he voiced as his mother. Once again, slipped into addiction. His support never wavered as once again his mother was imprisoned. At 16 yrs he held responsibility for his younger brothers for four months. I was astonished at his level of responsibility as he assumed the role his step-father abandoned.

The years were not easy when I returned. Although substance abuse no longer controlled me, the consequences of my life's choices came due. I am proud and thankful that Darrell Ray was always there with full support, wise and helpful advice; indeed a very strong factor to my continued success in overcoming.

There are very few family members Darrell Ray drew close. His paternal grandparents, Aunt, two cousins and of course two brothers. I've seen him drop anything he's doing to help any one of them. His grandfather died when he was 19. For 24 yrs lived with his grandmother.

There was no friend of hers who did not speak highly of his respect, kindness and helpful nature. I watched as Darrell grew into a man of responsibility, integrity and compassion. Tragically, in December of 2024, his brother was murdered. 7 months his grandmother died, his place of employment folded, he lost his apartment. Yet ~~he~~ he recovered with another job and home, never losing his sense of integrity but feeling more defeated it seemed.

I know, Your Honor, the seriousness of my son's offense. But I also know my son. I know the deep sense of conviction and remorse he is experiencing. I know of his growing desire and determination to help people overcome their darkness.

I implore you to have mercy and compassion in your sentencing. Please allow leniency that he may return to his family as soon as possible. But mostly to pursue his true purpose as a positive and compassionate human being bringing light into a dark world.

Respectfully, *Yvonne J. Sanders*